

Planning - Rubicon Trail Dispersed Use (FINAL)

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Version # _____

APP # 700488

A. Statement of Planning Objectives

There is a need to identify specific routes that provide 4WD and other motor vehicle access to appropriate dispersed camping areas off of the Rubicon 4WD Trail and areas appropriate for other dispersed uses such as picnicking, parking etc. This Planning Project is proposed to conduct the environmental analysis needed to evaluate and identify appropriate locations off of the Rubicon 4WD Trail where vehicle travel would be allowed.

The Rubicon 4WD Trail is located in the northernmost portion of the Pacific Ranger District in the Eldorado National Forest (see Map 1). This 4WD trail is an extremely challenging and highly popular trail, considered by many to be one of the premier OHV trails in the nation. El Dorado County is currently managing the trail, however the Forest Service is responsible for management of the uses off of the trail. Visitor counts conducted in 2005 by FOTR and 2009 by RTF indicate that use is approximately 25,000 visitor days on the Rubicon 4WD Trail during the summer months. Many visitors to the Rubicon Trail camp overnight along the trail or stop to picnic, enjoy the nearby lakes or to view the beautiful vistas.

This project will consist of a an Interdisciplinary Team collecting information regarding use, visitor needs and preferences, resource concerns, and other information, analyzing that information, and completing an environmental analysis to designate access to dispersed use areas adjacent to the Rubicon 4WD Trail. This project will meet the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for the District Ranger to make a decision regarding designating access to these dispersed use areas.

B. Relation of Proposed Project to OHV Recreation

The Rubicon 4WD Trail is a major OHV recreation opportunity located on the Eldorado National Forest. As described previously, the trail is managed by El Dorado County and the Forest Service manages the uses off of the Trail. There is a need to identify and designate areas where people can drive off of the Trail for the purposes of dispersed camping and other dispersed activities. Designating appropriate areas where OHVs can get off of the trail will assure that the use occurs in appropriate areas and that the impacts from this use are minimized. In April 2008, the Eldorado National Forest designated routes open to motor vehicle use and prohibited motor vehicle use off of designated routes. The proposed project will identify additional routes where motor vehicle will be authorized to travel off of the Rubicon Trail. This will allow for the continued use and enjoyment of the Rubicon Trail and associated activities.

The proposed project is also responsive to the Cleanup and Abatement Order issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CAO). This CAO identified concerns regarding erosion and other resource impacts from vehicles travelling off of the Rubicon trail and resource impacts from human waste. By designating routes providing access to appropriate dispersed camping areas, the proposed planning project will aid in reducing the impacts from improper disposal of human waste and will identify the need for toilets or other means of waste disposal. By resolving the impacts from vehicle use off of the Rubicon Trail and from associated human waste, this planning project will meet at least some of the requirements of the CAO in order to avoid closure of the Rubicon Trail.

C. Statement of Activities

The proposed planning project will be to complete an Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice, pursuant to NEPA, in order to designate locations where OHVs can travel off of the Rubicon 4WD Trail for dispersed camping and other dispersed uses. The project will consist of the creation of an interdisciplinary team made up of Eldorado National forest resource specialist and other program specialists (such as an OHV specialist, Trails specialist, law enforcement, etc.). The project will include development of the Proposed Action, public involvement and scoping, identification of issues and opportunities, identification of potential dispersed use areas, development of a range of alternatives to be considered, collection of resource information and analysis of the effects of implementing each of the alternatives, and completion of a Decision Notice. The project will include various public meetings and working with Rubicon Trail users and others to collect needed information. Volunteers, in coordination with El Dorado County, will assist in collecting use counts and other data

to be used in the analysis.

D. List of Reports

The project will produce a Draft Environmental Analysis, a Final Environmental Assessment and a Decision Document. Other documents that will be prepared include resource supporting documents such as a Biological Evaluation for Botany and Wildlife, a Watershed Cumulative Effects Analysis, a Riparian Conservation Objective Analysis, an Archaeological Reconnaissance Report, and other documents.

Additional Documentation

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1. Timeline for Completion

Attachments:

[Rubicon Dispersed Use Planning Timeline](#)

2. Optional Project-Specific Application Documents

3. Optional Project-specific Maps

Attachments:

[Rubicon Trail Location Map](#)

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2009/2010
Agency: USFS - Eldorado National Forest
Application: Planning - Rubicon Trail Dispersed Use (FINAL)

3/1/2010

Project Cost Estimate

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APPLICANT NAME :	USFS - Eldorado National Forest		
PROJECT TITLE :	Planning - Rubicon Trail Dispersed Use (FINAL)	PROJECT NUMBER (Division use only) :	G09-02-03-P01
PROJECT TYPE :	<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Development</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Education & Safety</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Ground Operations</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Restoration</div> </div>		
PROJECT DESCRIPTION :	<p>There is a need to identify specific routes that provide 4WD and other motor vehicle access to appropriate dispersed camping areas off of the Rubicon 4WD Trail and areas appropriate for other dispersed uses such as picnicking, parking etc. This Planning Project is proposed to conduct the environmental analysis needed to evaluate and identify appropriate locations off of the Rubicon 4WD Trail where vehicle travel would be allowed.</p> <p>The Rubicon 4WD Trail is located in the northernmost portion of the Pacific Ranger District in the Eldorado National Forest (see Map 1). This 4WD trail is an extremely challenging and highly popular trail, considered by many to be one of the premier OHV trails in the nation. El Dorado County is currently managing the trail, however the Forest Service is responsible for management of the uses off of the trail. Visitor counts conducted in 2005 by FOTR and 2009 by RTF indicate that use is approximately 25,000 visitor days on the Rubicon 4WD Trail during the summer months. Many visitors to the Rubicon Trail camp overnight along the trail or stop to picnic, enjoy the nearby lakes or to view the beautiful vistas.</p> <p>This project will consist of a an Interdisciplinary Team collecting information regarding use, visitor needs and preferences, resource concerns, and other information, analyzing that information, and completing an environmental analysis to designate access to dispersed use areas adjacent to the Rubicon 4WD Trail. This project will meet the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for the District Ranger to make a decision regarding designating access to these dispersed use areas.</p>		

	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
DIRECT EXPENSES							
Program Expenses							
1	Staff						
	Field Office Staff Notes : Team Leader	40.000	375.000	DAY	11,250.00	3,750.00	15,000.00
	Other-Hydrologist	20.000	380.000	DAY	7,600.00	0.00	7,600.00
	Other-Archaeologist	15.000	380.000	DAY	5,700.00	0.00	5,700.00
	Other-Biologist	15.000	380.000	DAY	5,700.00	0.00	5,700.00
	GIS Specialist	10.000	300.000	DAY	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00

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	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
	Other-Recreation Planner	25.000	400.000	DAY	7,500.00	2,500.00	10,000.00
	Other-Botanist	20.000	375.000	DAY	7,500.00	0.00	7,500.00
	Other-Landscape Architect	10.000	380.000	DAY	3,800.00	0.00	3,800.00
	Other-Trails/Transpt. Planner	15.000	380.000	DAY	2,900.00	2,800.00	5,700.00
	Other-Public Affairs	5.000	425.000	DAY	0.00	2,125.00	2,125.00
	Other-Public Meeting Facilitator	2.000	400.000	DAY	800.00	0.00	800.00
	Other-District Ranger	10.000	425.000	DAY	0.00	4,250.00	4,250.00
	Other-Arch Field Crew	7.000	300.000	DAY	2,100.00	0.00	2,100.00
	Other-Hydro Field Crew	5.000	380.000	DAY	1,900.00	0.00	1,900.00
	Other-Bio Field Crew	7.000	300.000	DAY	2,100.00	0.00	2,100.00
	Other-Volunteer Data Collection Notes : Volunteers to help identify dispersed use areas, conduct visitor use counts and identify proposed parking needs.	320.000	20.250	HRS	0.00	6,480.00	6,480.00
	Total for Staff				61,850.00	21,905.00	83,755.00
2	Contracts						
3	Materials / Supplies						
	Misc Supplies to support Program	3.000	500.000	MISC	750.00	750.00	1,500.00
	Other-Room rental, etc	1.000	500.000	MISC	0.00	500.00	500.00
	Total for Materials / Supplies				750.00	1,250.00	2,000.00
4	Equipment Use Expenses						
	Field Vehicle	2500.000	0.500	MI	0.00	1,250.00	1,250.00
5	Equipment Purchases						
6	Others						

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2009/2010
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3/1/2010

	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
	Other-Field Crew per diem	10.000	75.000	DAY	750.00	0.00	750.00
7	Indirect Costs						
	Indirect Costs-Grant administration and	15.000	400.000	EA	2,000.00	4,000.00	6,000.00
Total Program Expenses					65,350.00	28,405.00	93,755.00
TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES					65,350.00	28,405.00	93,755.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES					65,350.00	28,405.00	93,755.00

Project Cost Summary for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2009/2010
 Agency: USFS - Eldorado National Forest
 Application: Planning - Rubicon Trail Dispersed Use (FINAL)

3/1/2010

	Line Item	Grant Request	Match	Total	Narrative
DIRECT EXPENSES					
Program Expenses					
1	Staff	61,850.00	21,905.00	83,755.00	
2	Contracts	0.00	0.00	0.00	
3	Materials / Supplies	750.00	1,250.00	2,000.00	
4	Equipment Use Expenses	0.00	1,250.00	1,250.00	
5	Equipment Purchases	0.00	0.00	0.00	
6	Others	750.00	0.00	750.00	
7	Indirect Costs	2,000.00	4,000.00	6,000.00	
Total Program Expenses		65,350.00	28,405.00	93,755.00	
TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES		65,350.00	28,405.00	93,755.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		65,350.00	28,405.00	93,755.00	

Environmental Review Data Sheet (ERDS)

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ITEM 1 and ITEM 2

ITEM 1

- a. ITEM 1 - Has a CEQA Notice of Determination (NOD) been filed for the Project? ☐ Yes ☒ No
(Please select Yes or No)

ITEM 2

- b. Does the proposed Project include a request for funding for CEQA and/or NEPA document preparation prior to implementing the remaining Project Deliverables (i.e., is it a two-phased Project pursuant to Section 4970.06.1(b)) (Please select Yes or No) ☒ Yes ☐ No

ITEM 3 - Project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378

- c. ITEM 3 - Are the proposed activities a "Project" under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378? ☐ Yes ☒ No
(Please select Yes or No)
- d. The Application is requesting funds solely for personnel and support to enforce OHV laws and ensure public safety. These activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No
- e. Other. Explain why proposed activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. DO NOT complete ITEMS 4 – 10

ITEM 4 - Impact of this Project on Wetlands

ITEM 5 - Cumulative Impacts of this Project

ITEM 6 - Soil Impacts

ITEM 7 - Damage to Scenic Resources

ITEM 8 - Hazardous Materials

Is the proposed Project Area located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code (hazardous materials)? (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, describe the location of the hazard relative to the Project site, the level of hazard and the measures to be taken to minimize or avoid the hazards.

ITEM 9 - Potential for Adverse Impacts to Historical or Cultural Resources

Would the proposed Project have potential for any substantial adverse impacts to historical or cultural resources? (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No

Discuss the potential for the proposed Project to have any substantial adverse impacts to historical or cultural resources.

ITEM 10 - Indirect Significant Impacts

CEQA/NEPA Attachment

Planning Project Criteria

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1. Project Cost Estimate - Q 1. (Auto populates from Cost Estimate)

1. As calculated on the Project Cost Estimate, the percentage of the Project costs covered by the Applicant is 3

(Note: This field will auto-populate once the Cost Estimate and Evaluation Criteria are Validated.) (Please select one from list)

☐ 76% or more (10 points)

☐ 51% - 75% (5 points)

☒ 26% - 50% (3 points)

☐ 25% (Match minimum) (No points)

2. Planning Project - Q 2.

A Planning Project - Page 1

2. The Planning Project would address the following 4

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

☐ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on special-status species habitats

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on cultural resources

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on soil conditions

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on water quality

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on other recreation uses

☒ Potential effects of OHV Recreation on adjacent lands.

☐ Potential impact to relationships between OHV Recreation and local residents

☐ Toxic or hazardous materials within a Project Area or adjacent property that may impact OHV Recreation

☒ Trail issues such as traffic patterns, trails closures, appropriate uses, etc.

B. Planning Project - Page 2

Explain each statement that was checked

The project will designate appropriate locations adjacent to the Rubicon 4WD Trail where OHVs are permitted to travel while avoiding impacting cultural resources. This area contains approximately 25 prehistoric and historic sites.

The project will also reduce potential effects from OHV use on water quality and soil resources through locating dispersed recreation sites in stable and appropriate areas that do not drain directly into streams and other water bodies.

Adjacent private land occurs along the Rubicon 4WD Trail. This project will provide dispersed camping areas and sites for other dispersed uses so as to avoid impacts to adjacent private land, such as lands owned by SPI.

Through identifying appropriate locations for dispersed camping, the project will help to deal with overcrowding in certain locations and will reduce the likelihood of trail closure due to human waste and water quality impacts. Past closures along the Rubicon Trail have occurred for all public use due to human waste impacts.

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

☒ 6 or more items checked (4 points)

☐ 4 to 5 items checked (3 points)

☐ 2 to 3 items checked (2 points)

☐ 1 or no items checked (No points)

3. Motorized Access - Q 3.

3. The Project would lead to improved facilities that provide motorized access to the following nonmotorized recreation opportunities 6

(Check all that apply) Scoring: 2 points each, up to a maximum of 6 points (Please select applicable values)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Camping | <input type="checkbox"/> Birding |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hiking | <input type="checkbox"/> Equestrian trails |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock Climbing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) [family recreation] | |

4. Public Input - Q 4.

4. The Project proposal was developed with public input employing the following 2

(Check all that apply) Scoring: Maximum of 2 points (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Publicly noticed meeting(s) with the general public to discuss Project (1 point)
☐ Conference call(s) with interested parties (1 point)
☒ Meeting(s) with stakeholders (1 point)

Explain each statement that was checked

The proposal has been discussed during meetings of the Rubicon Oversight Committee, at El Dorado County Board of Supervisor meetings and during field trips attended by a variety of interested individuals.

5. Stakeholder Input - Q 5.

5. If the Project were approved, the planning process would incorporate substantial stakeholder input: 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☐ No (No points) ☒ Yes (5 points)

If 'Yes', explain, specifically, how it would be 'substantial'. Identify stakeholders

Dispersed camping areas and sites for other dispersed uses will be identified in coordination with OHV users and other interested parties. The project proposes to use volunteers, in cooperation with El Dorado County, to assist in identifying use patterns and sites being used. In addition, the Forest Service's process of implementing NEPA includes significant opportunities for public input and involvement, including public scoping and commenting on the draft documents

6. Utilization of Partnerships - Q 6.

6. The Project will utilize partnerships to successfully accomplish the Project. The number of partner organizations that will participate in the Project are 4

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☒ 4 or more (4 points) ☐ 2 to 3 (2 points)
☐ 1 (1 point) ☐ None (No points)

List partner organization(s)

El Dorado County, Friends of the Rubicon, Rubicon Trail Foundation, Friends of the Eldorado National Forest, and the Rubicon Oversight Committee

7. Sustain OHV Opportunity - Q 7.

7. The Planning Project sustains OHV Opportunity in the following manner 10

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Project will develop management plans for existing OHV Opportunity (4 points)
☒ Project will complete environmental review for an OHV Development Project (3 points)
☒ Project supports development of OHV Opportunities adjacent to population centers (3 points)
☐ Project supports development of OHV Opportunities in areas that lack legal OHV Opportunity (2 points)

- ☐ Project will develop a system of designated OHV routes for an existing OHV Opportunity (2 points)

Explain each statement that was checked

The environmental analysis to be completed will designate routes that provide access for dispersed camping and other dispersed uses, thus improving the recreation opportunity along the Rubicon 4WD Trail. In the future, the Forest Service will pursue funding to develop and harden any dispersed use areas, such as through barriers to limit travel outside of the dispersed use areas or through installation of toilets or other sanitation needs. The Rubicon Trail is located in the Sierra Nevada, within a reasonable travel distance of major population centers such as Sacramento, South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County.

8. Identification of Funding Sources - Q 8.

8. Funds for implementing the completed plan have been identified 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☐ No (No points) ☒ Yes (5 points)

Explain 'Yes' response

Funding and volunteer labor through volunteer groups, including the RTF and FOTR (for installing signs, informational kiosks, distributing information at the trailhead, etc.), along with Forest funding and potential OHV grant funds (patrols, signs and sign materials, information kiosk materials, barriers,, etc.).

Reference Document

Comment letter from Randy Burleson, past El Dorado County grant request for toilets along the Rubicon Trail, past volunteer efforts from FOTR and RTF.

9. Offsite Impacts - Q 9.

9. The Planning Project would address offsite impacts relative to the Project Area (e.g., sound, fugitive dust, runoff): 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☐ No (No points) ☒ Yes (5 points)

Explain 'Yes' response

A Cleanup and Abatement Order issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control board has identified that erosion, petroleum products, and human waste are impacting the waters of the State. These impacts are occurring along the Rubicon Trail and adjacent to the trail in areas of dispersed use.